

REMARKS:

Claims 24-64 were pending in this application. Claims 24-25, 27, 29, 33, 41-43, 48-49, 52 and 56-57 were amended. Claims 31-32, 34, 38-40, 46-47, 55, and 64 were canceled. Therefore, claims 24-30, 33, 35-37, 41-45, 48-54, and 56-63 remain pending in this application.

Art-Based Rejections

The Examiner rejected the pending independent claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US PGPub 2002/0111960 to Irons et al in view of US Patent No 6,188,746 to Kocher. *See* Office Action at p. 2. Applicant traverses these rejections.

As an initial matter, it appears that the Kocher patent is incorrectly cited. Applicant assumes that the relevant patent is U.S. Patent No. 6,188,766. Furthermore, after initially citing Kocher, the Examiner does not appear to refer to this reference again. Instead, the Examiner appears to allege that Irons discloses each and every limitation of the pending claims. *See* Office Action at 3-12. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the 103 rejection based on Irons and Kocher is not properly stated, since no mention of the teachings of Kocher are included in the Office Action. As such, Applicant treats the pending rejections as 102 rejections based on Irons and also as 103 rejections based on Irons alone.

With regard to Irons, Applicant submits that the cited Irons reference is not prior art to the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Applicant submits that the pending claims are entitled to a priority date of at least September 17, 2000, the filing date of the application that issued into U.S. Patent No. 6,775,422. Even assuming Irons could be considered prior art to the pending claims (which Applicant does not concede), the pending claims are patentably distinct over Irons, as shown below.

Claim 24

Amended claim 24 recites:

A method, comprising:

receiving a succession of electronic documents into a document management system, wherein each of the succession of electronic documents is received at a corresponding point in time; and
for each of at least a subset of the received electronic documents:
generating a unique time-based identifier corresponding to the point in time at which the electronic document was received; and
storing the electronic document in a storage system at a storage location corresponding to the unique time-based identifier for the electronic document;
wherein the electronic document is retrievable from the storage system using its unique time-based identifier.

Applicant submits that Irons does not teach or suggest, among other things, “generating a unique time-based identifier corresponding to the point in time at which the electronic document was received” for “each of the received electronic documents” or “storing the electronic document in a storage system at a corresponding storage location corresponding to the unique time-based identifier for the electronic document,” as recited in claim 24.

Instead, Irons merely teaches using a “globally unique identifier” as “the link between image index database 228 and the document images contained in document image repository 226.” *See* Irons at [0095]. The “globally unique identifier” of Irons is used “to represent or relate to the final image file name” and “use the bar code to transport that file name/identifier with the related paper-based document.” *See* Irons at [0095]. Irons goes on to teach “affixing a globally unique identifier to the [physical] document (by placing a pre-printed label bearing the globally unique identifier on the document or by printing the globally unique identifier directly on the document).” *See id.* at [0039]. Irons further discloses “electronically storing the document using the globally unique identifier extracted from the digital image of the label in conjunction with the user supplied indexing information.” *See id.* When Irons refers to “electronically storing the document using the globally unique identifier,” however, this merely refers to using the “global unique identifier” “as the basis for the image file name for the image, thereby linking the document image to a record in an image index database.” *See id.* at [0049]. Thus the “the globally unique identifier” of Irons “will be the file name or will form the basis for creating the file name” of “the digital image of the paper-based document,” for the benefit of “linking the paper-based document and the subsequently created digital image of the paper-based document.” *See id.* at [0049].

Nowhere, however, does Irons teach that the “globally unique identifier” is claim 24’s “unique time-based identifier,” facilitating “storing the electronic document in a storage system at a storage location corresponding to the unique time-based identifier for the electronic document.” Furthermore, Irons does not teach or suggest that “the electronic document is retrievable from the storage system using its unique time-based identifier” of claim 24. Accordingly, claim 24 and its respective dependent claims are believed to be patentably distinct over Irons for at least these reasons. Claims 41, 48, and 56, and their respective dependent claims, are believed to be patentably distinct over Irons for at least reasons similar to those stated for claim 24.

Claim 25

Claim 25 recites:

The method of claim 24, wherein said receiving includes receiving a first electronic document at a first point in time corresponding to a first date and a first time of day within the first date, wherein the unique time-based identifier of the first electronic document corresponds to the first date and the first time of day.

Applicant submits that Irons does not teach or suggest, among other things, that “the unique time-based identifier of the first electronic document corresponds to the first date and the first time of day” as recited in claim 25. Instead, Irons merely teaches using a “globally unique identifier” as “the link between image index database 228 and the document images contained in document image repository 226,” as discussed above. *See* Irons at [0095]. Furthermore, the cited “date” of Irons merely corresponds to the “other descriptive information used to identify the document” such as “date” that is printed on a “label for the paper-based document.” *See id.* at [0048]. In other words, the “computer” of Irons “communicates with a desktop label printer which generates a label for the paper-based documents” for “later retrieval of the paper-based documents via the globally unique identifier.” *See id.* at [0048]. Thus Irons does not teach or suggest that “the unique time-based identifier of the first electronic document corresponds to the first date and the first time of day” as required by claim 25, and instead merely teaches a system that “generates a label for the paper-based documents,” where the “label” includes the “date” of the “document.” *See id.* Furthermore, nowhere does Irons teach or suggest using “time of day

within the first date” as required by claim 25. Accordingly, claim 25 is believed to be patentably distinct over Irons for at least these additional reasons.

Claims 42, 49, and 57 are believed to be patentably distinct over Irons for at least the additional reasons provided in support of claim 25.

Therefore removal of the section § 102 rejections is respectfully requested.

103 Rejections

The Office Action rejects claims 31, 32, 40, 46, and 47 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as “being unpatentable over US Patent No. 5,813,009 to Johnson et al as applied to claims 24, 39, and 42 respectively, and further in view of US PGPub 20020023067 to Garland at all.” *See* Office Action at p. 12. Applicant traverses these rejections.

Applicant notes that there is some confusion as to which reference serves as the basis for the § 103 rejection. Although the Examiner initially cites Johnson, the Examiner does not appear to refer to this reference again, and refers to Irons instead. *See* Office Action at p. 12. Regardless of the reference used, Applicant asserts that since the independent claims have been shown to be patentably distinct, a further discussion of the dependent claims 31, 32, 40, 46, and 47 is not necessary at this time.

Applicant also asserts that numerous ones of the remaining dependent claims recite further distinctions over the cited art. However, since the independent claims have been shown to be patentably distinct, a further discussion of the remaining dependent claims is not necessary at this time.

Therefore removal of the section § 103 rejections is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION:

Applicants submit the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is requested.

Applicant has petitioned herewith for what is believed to be the appropriate extension of time. If any further extensions are necessary to prevent the above-referenced application from becoming abandoned, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert & Goetzel, P.C. Deposit Account No. 501505/5957-72402/DMM.

Respectfully submitted,

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